

Nashville-Davidson County Continuum of Care (CoC)

UNITY & OPPORTUNITY MEETING MINUTES

DATE: MARCH 3, 2025

LOCATION: Oasis Center

TIME: 11AM

FACILITATORS	Alyssa Fernandez, Oasis Center
RECORDED BY	Raquel de la Huerga, OHS Continuum of Care Manager
ATTENDANCE	Alyssa Fernandez (Oasis), Raven Nye (The Contributor), Suzie Tolmie (MDHA), Ares Miller (VUMC), Raquel de la Huerga (OHS), Allison Cantway (OHS), Stephen Watts (BMHV), Nelson Guillen (NOAH), Liz Mallard (HPC), Giovanni Achoe (MSS), Bobby Watts (NHCHC)

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
UPDATES	Since the last meeting, the Office of Homeless Services has met with three separate groups to provide updates from the February Unity & Opportunity meeting regarding efforts to comply with the federal executive orders. Those groups included: • Continuum of Care Funded Partners – Alyssa and Suzie were in attendance for this meeting. OHS shared with funded partners committee's concerns regarding executive orders and the need to protect the community's CoC funding. OHS will be meeting with funded partners weekly and has asked those providers to help develop a community narrative on how many clients, staff, and landlords would be impacted if Nashville were to lose CoC funding, based on guidance given by NAEH. • Executive Committee of the Homelessness Planning Council – Giovanni and Suzie presented the minutes from the February Unity & Opportunity meeting and fielded questions from the Executive Committee members. The Executive Committee was receptive to the committee's suggestions, while recognizing the immense loss of an impactful body of work. Members of the Executive Committee asked if the Values Statement and Pledge could be amended to comply with the executive order, however, Unity representatives shared that this was not feasible, and it would be better to remove the documents altogether. There was broad consensus around this course of action. • Lived Experience Leaders – OHS walked the members through the executive orders along with other federal changes that may impact the Continuum of Care and people with lived experience. They overwhelmingly agreed that the community is too reliant on federal funding at this time to risk not complying. Attendees hope to aid in OHS efforts to spread the narrative for how losing CoC funding could impact Nashville, including efforts to reduce stigma and explore the need for alternative funding streams. OHS shared a recent development that 6 out of 8 HUD technical assistance providers tasked to assist CoCs across the country had their contracts terminated due non-compliance with the executive orders on the social media profiles of their individual staff members. One of the technical assistance providers identified includes Cloudburst, which has been assisting Nashville on a range of initiatives over the last three years, including their current efforts to help our community re-tool the Coordinated Entry Assessment. Cloudburst had all of their federal contracts terminated instantly, regardless of which employees were working on them and the

Nashville-Davidson County Continuum of Care (CoC)

UNITY & OPPORTUNITY MEETING MINUTES

	scope of each contract. This news has reinforced concerns that there is a need to be proactive to comply with executive orders to protect federal funding.
DISCUSSION	Attendees discussed the importance of taking the steps necessary, within reason, to maintain the community's Continuum of Care funding. Attendees recognized the individuals and organizations may be struggling with the premise of these executive orders, however, there is a need to comply with the law and executive orders. Attendees recognized the community's concerns, while emphasizing the need to be prepared for the federal government to take action regardless of its legality. Attendees also noted that individual and organization decision-making have a different level of impact than having to protect funding that impacts the entire community. Attendees recommended that several CoC initiatives be <i>suspended</i> due to the federal executive orders. Attendees also recognized that federal executive orders overrule local administrative processes, including those of the CoC, questioning if there is even room for the community to decide whether or not to comply. OHS shared a compiled description of the Initiatives Efficiency Committee based on the February minutes. OHS shared that the Executive Committee expressed concerns that the proposed description of the Initiatives Efficiency Committee could overlap with other committee responsibilities. The Executive Committee recognized that the proposed description reflects many yet to be addressed initiatives across the CoC, while wanting to be intentional in standing up another committee. The HPC Chair suggested for the scope of the new committee to be discussed with other chairs and the HPC to ensure alignment. Attendees also emphasized the need to promote collaboration across committees and partnership with community organizations that may be able to support the outlined initiatives. One suggestion was to partner with Vanderbilt's Wondry Map the System Program. Attendees also suggested for the language "and support the efficiency of initiatives within the Continuum of Care Strategic Plan" to replace the final clause in the description. Attendees expressed concerns about language in the description referring to "exploring creative resource streams". Attendees noted a willingness to explore creative solutions, while recognizing that most of the likely members of the future committee are not experts in finance or fundraising. Others clarified that it would be helpful to maintain this language to provide the flexibility to research current funding streams and identify alternative opportunities. Attendees also suggested that language around grievance procedures be added to the description. Attendees asked for clarification on what it will look like to change the name and scope of the committee. OHS agreed to discuss such changes with the HPC Chair. Once a committee is established, the HPC Chair would appoint a chair, who would then create a list of members to recommend. Stephen Watts moved to pre-emptively recommend that Alyssa Fernandez to serve as the chair of the Initiative Efficiency Committee. Seconded by Bobby Watts. All in favor. Motion carried and OHS will inform the HPC Chair of the group's preference. Attendees noted that it will be vital to ensure that these changes be communicated very clearly at the upcoming Homelessness Planning Council and General Membership meetings. There will likely be many questions that the group will want to

Nashville-Davidson County Continuum of Care (CoC)

UNITY & OPPORTUNITY MEETING MINUTES

	be prepared to field. OHS will continue to try to update the community in upcoming meetings. Attendees noted that some members of the HPC and GM might not be fully informed of recent federal developments and worried that some might not understand that not complying with the executive order would risk the entire CoC's funding. Attendees agreed that the urgency to move forward as the federal government could be actively monitoring communities for non-compliance. Members also asked for the community narrative on the potential impacts of losing CoC funded to be shared with the General Membership and Homelessness Planning Council, so they know what is at risk.
ADJOURN	12:47PM